

**OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL****Pipeline Safety Division**

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<b>DOCKET</b>	
<b>04-SIT-1</b>	
<b>DATE</b>	FEB 15 2005
<b>RECD.</b>	FEB 22 2005

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February 15, 2005

Commissioner John L. Geesman  
California Energy Commission  
1516 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

SUBJECT: Petroleum Infrastructure Best Permitting Practices Hearing

I attended your hearing in Martinez yesterday but was unable to stay until it ended so that I could introduce myself. I am very interested in the work you and your colleagues have undertaken regarding the obstacles to prompt permitting of pipelines and other petroleum infrastructure.

For quite a few years, our office has supported the need for this type of review. The State Fire Marshal is not a "permitting" agency so we find ourselves in a position of recognizing a significant problem without being able to take any type of leadership role in solving the issues. (While we do not issue permits, we do have authority to "close" a pipeline until safe operations can be assured.) The difficulties pipeline companies have encountered in getting permits for pro-active repairs and replacement pipeline segments has caused our staff many headaches over the past few years. With the aging infrastructure of the current pipeline systems and continued growth of heavily urbanized areas that conflict with once-rural pipeline right-of-ways, we anticipate that the problem will only continue to worsen until a solution is developed.

The purpose of this letter is to offer our continued support of your initiative to examine the permitting practices currently in place and develop a plan for streamlining the processes. If we can assist in any way or if you would like additional information regarding the hazardous liquid pipelines in California that fall under our program's jurisdiction, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach me by phone at (916) 445-8348 or by email at [nancy.wolfe@fire.ca.gov](mailto:nancy.wolfe@fire.ca.gov)

NANCY WOLFE, Chief  
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